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U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, July 27, 1931

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Speaking Time: 10 Minutes.

Subject: "Frosty Drinks for Hot Days." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes Revised."

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Did you ever hear of a home beverage fountain? Neither did I until Uncle Silas suggested the idea. Now, one is firmly established in our household and the family all declare it a great success.

When Uncle Silas goes for his afternoon stroll around the block, he doesn't miss anything that's happening in the neighborhood. So he usually comes back full of observations and new ideas. One day as he came up the steps, Betty Jane called to him, "What did you see today, Uncle Silas?"

"What did I see? I'll tell you. I saw a man making piles of money. Yes, sircce. Don't talk to me about hard times and business depression after I've seen somebody gathering nickels and dimes so fast you couldn't count them."

"Who was he?"

"The soda pop man down on the corner. His cart is surrounded with hot, thirsty youngsters swallowing bottle after bottle of his wares."

"I think I could drink five bottles right this minute," said Betty Jane.

"Gracious. There might be a very bad tummy ache around here if that happened. A big drink of cool water would be much safer."

"But on hot days like this, Uncle Silas, I like to sip something that is sort of sweet and sort of sour, all at once, you know. That soda pop man has all kinds of drinks like that--red ones, green ones and a lot of other colors. A bottle only costs a nickel. And you get two straws with each bottle."

Betty Jane looked hopefully at Uncle Silas. But he only said, "When I was your age, young lady, I never teased my uncle for nickels."

"I wasn't teasing. I was just hinting."

"Well, when I was your age I'm sure I never even hinted. Back in those days there weren't any soda pop men. We youngsters drank homemade lemonade chilled with cold well water. When we were especially good, we had beautiful pink lemonade, colored with raspberry juice."

"Mmmm. That sounds good."

"It tasted good, too. My mother had an idea that fruit juice was a wholesome drink for boys and girls. Of, course she had never heard about vitamins and mineral and the other things the wise scientists have discovered in fruits. But she seemed to know what was healthy for her children just the same. While she was canning or jelly-making, she used to save out some juice here and there and mix up some delicious concoctions. Then she would put them in bottles down in the cold cellar, and when we came in hot and tired that afternoon, there was a treat ready for us. It was just like having a cold drink fountain all our own."

"Oh, how nice," exclaimed Betty Jane. "Why don't you fix up one of those cold drink fountains, Aunt Sammy?"

That is how the idea started. The credit, as I said, really goes to Uncle Silas. . . . Of course, the day of the cold cellar is past in most of our homes. The refrigerator has taken its place. So one shelf in our refrigerator is dedicated, during the summer months, to supplies for refreshing drinks. I'm always ready to make any one of a score of beverages on a moment's notice. In the middle of a hot afternoon, when we are all thirsty, we have a family party out on the porch to rest and sip some orange tea or blackberry cordial. When friends drop in, the makings are all ready for the best sort of warm-weather refreshments. At meal time we manage to have a new beverage almost every day.

Time was when such cold drinks were considered thirst quenchers and nothing more. Now we know that both fruit and milk drinks are good food and deserve a regular place in the summer diet. What nicer way to get your minerals and vitamins than by a fruit-ade? What better way to wake up appetites than by a delicious colorful fruit mixture with flavor to tempt the most jaded? As for milk drinks, they offer new and inviting ways to serve the daily milk quota. Any of these beverages helps replenish the moisture that the body loses so rapidly in hot weather. And those six glasses of water a day that we human beings need for health. Part of that need can be supplied in the form of beverages. When you are planning menus to include these beverages, remember that milk drinks are generally more nourishing than punches. An egg-chocolate-malted-milk shake, for example, is almost a meal in itself.

Suppose now that you are planning to have a cold drink corner in your refrigerator. What supplies should be on hand so that you can serve a cooling beverage at a moment's notice?

First on the list will be a jar or bottle of sugar syrup. Granulated or lump sugar dissolves very slowly in any cold liquid. You know how it sinks to the bottom of your glass of iced tea and insists on staying there in spite of stirring. A sugar-and-water syrup, however, quickly blends and sweetens

the entire glassful evenly. The syrup is made by boiling together one cup of sugar and one cup of water for about five minutes. Be sure not to boil down too much. Cool and bottle the syrup and tuck it away in the refrigerator for use when needed.

You will also want on your shelf some jars of fruit syrups or juices. It's a good idea to save the liquid from canned or stewed fruits or from jelly and preserve making. A mixture of left-overs from different fruits is most delicious. Other useful left-overs are coffee and tea. Keep a jar of each on hand ready for iced tea or coffee. These two drinks should be put in jars when strong but still fresh. Coffee has a poor flavor if left to stand on the grounds, and tea that has stood too long over the tea leaves becomes bitter. Strong tea may be added to any fruit punch. It gives a slightly different flavor and increases the quantity without weakening it as water would.

Three items on the shelf so far--sugar syrup, fruit juices, coffee and tea. Then there are ginger ale or other carbonated drinks. They give zip and sparkle to fruit mixtures. Keep some oranges and lemons on hand, too, and some red cherries and fresh mint for garnishing. For milk shakes, coffee or chocolate syrup will be useful.

Of course, I wouldn't think of giving a talk on a subject like this without first having a conversation with the Recipe Lady. I went to see her the other day, and in about two minutes she had filled my head with helpful pointers on punch-making.

The best fruit drinks, she says, are made with an acid foundation, to which other milder, but more flavorsome, juices are added. It's just as Betty Jane says-- a drink needs to be both sour and sweet all at once. Lemon juice is the old stand-by for the acid foundation. Rhubarb juice or tart apple juice may also be used. For adding flavor, the Recipe Lady says, count on raspberry juice. It is both delicious and penetrating. The flavor of red raspberry juice can be distinguished in a drink even when only a small quantity is used.

I asked the Recipe Lady if she approved of preparing a big supply of orange or lemon juice ahead of time and keeping it ready in the refrigerator? She shook her head. Citrus fruit juice, she said, changes its flavor on standing and also loses some of its vitamins.

To bring out the flavor, add a pinch of salt to any drink. And make the mixture long enough ahead of time for it to ripen and the flavors to blend. For chilling, there is nothing like cracked ice. A large block of ice standing in a bowl of punch dilutes the punch around it until it is too watery to be of good flavor. Cracked ice, however, dilutes the solution evenly. Add the ice and the sugar syrup to the concentrated fruit mixture and stir well. Then taste the mixture. If it needs to be diluted further, add a little ice water, tea or ginger ale. But remember to do your diluting always the very last thing.

Half the pleasure to be had in summer drinks comes from their appearance. Delicate colors, tall crystal glasses, a sprig of fresh mint for a garnish, or a slice of lemon or orange perched on the rim of the glass-- these are the things that make beverages especially appealing.

The menu today is a most appropriate one. It happens to be a lunch for a hot day. Shall we write it? Cold sliced tongue; tomato-egg toast sandwich; Iced orange tea; Sliced peaches; and Sponge cake.

The tomato egg sandwich is an open sandwich. Lay a three-cornered piece of buttered toast on a plate. On it lay a crisp piece of lettuce. Spread on mayonnaise, then a slice or two of tomato, and on top put a spoonful of hard-cooked egg run through a ricer. Very likely 2 or 3 sandwiches prepared in this way will be needed for each person. The sandwich looks something like a red and yellow flower. Lettuce for leaves, tomato for petals, and riced egg for the center.

For orange tea, I have a recipe that serves just four people. I'll give you just the ingredients. You'll know how to mix and chill them. Six ingredients:

1/2 cup of cold tea
1 cup of orange juice
1/4 cup of lemon juice
1/2 cup of pineapple juice, and
Sugar syrup to taste
A little salt
Once more. (Repeat).

Tomorrow. "Housekeeping Trade Secrets."

